

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheets make changes to Figs. 1C-7, 10-11C, 13A and 13B and replace the original sheets with Figs. 1A-7 and 10-13B.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 9 and 10; Figs. 1C-7, 10-11C, 13A and 13B; and the specification at paragraphs [0038]-[0045] are amended. Support for the amendments to the claims may be found, for example, in the specification at paragraphs [0034], [0036] and [0043] and in Figs. 1A-2A, 6 and 8-10. No new matter is added.

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 2, 3, 11 and 12 contain allowable subject matter. Specifically, these claims are indicated as allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and if rewritten in independent form to include all the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants appreciate this indication of allowability, but respectfully submit that at least claim 1, from which these claims depend, and the other claims depending from claim 1 are allowable for at least the reasons indicated below.

II. Objections to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings for various informalities. Applicants respectfully traverse the objections.

By this Amendment, Figs. 13A and 13B are amended to include a legend designating Figs. 13A and 13B as prior art. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, Figs. 1C, 2A, 2B, 3C, 4C, 5, 7, 11A-11C, 13A and 13B are amended to illustrate rubber elements 4 and 40 with a cross-hatch pattern selected in

accordance with MPEP §608.02. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, Fig. 10 is amended to substitute reference numeral "2a" for reference numeral "2d." Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, Figs. 2A-7 are amended to distinguish between modified forms of features by way of primes. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

III. Objections to the Specification

The Office Action objects to the specification at page 14, line 1, because "holes 2b" should be changed to "holes 2c." By this Amendment, paragraph [0038] of the specification is amended to replace "holes 2b" with "holes 2c." Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the detailed description as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter of claims 1, 5, 9, 11 and 15. Applicants presume that the Office Action is referring to the section entitled "BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION" in referring to the "detailed description." Applicants respectfully submit that the specification as a whole, and not the detailed description alone, should be evaluated for providing antecedent basis to the claims. See MPEP §608.01(o).

Antecedent basis for claims 1, 5, 9, 11 and 15 is found in the specification as originally filed. Antecedent basis for claim 5, 9, 11 and 15 may be found in the specification at paragraphs [0011], [0015], [0020] and [0023], respectively. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Objection

The Office Action objects to claims 6 and 7 under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c) as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim.

Applicants respectfully traverse the objection.

Claim 4 requires that "the protrusion is circular in a plane." Claim 6 further limits claim 4 by requiring that "the protrusion has a shape substantially resembling a semisphere." Fig. 5 shows an exemplary protrusion having a shape substantially resembling a semisphere. See also paragraph [0042].

Claim 7 further limits claim 4 by requiring that "the protrusion has a shape substantially resembling a truncated circular cone." Figs. 1A and 1C show an exemplary protrusion having a shape substantially resembling a truncated circular cone. See also paragraph [0035].

Both a semisphere shape and a truncated circular cone shape are circular in a plane. Nevertheless, both shapes are different. For example, both shapes are different at the furthest projecting portions thereof. Thus, claims 6 and 7 each further limit claim 4. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

V. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to recite that "the lateral areas of the joining surfaces extend in a direction parallel to an axis about which the flanges rotate." Thus, the features that extend in a direction parallel to an axis about which the flanges rotate are identified.

By this Amendment, claim 9 is amended to recite "a peripheral part of the mounting plate in a reduced thickness." Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 9 is definite. Support for claim 9 may be found, for example, in the specification at paragraph [0036] and in Figs. 1A-2A. Thus, when read in light of the specification and the figures, one of ordinary skill in the art is apprised of the metes and bounds of claim 9.

By this Amendment, claim 10 is amended to remove the term "slightly," which formed the basis for rejecting claim 10. Thus, claim 10 is definite.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

VI. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 4-10, 13 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,457,507 to Strachovsky ("Strachovsky"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Strachovsky at least fails to teach "a pair of mounting plates attached respectively to a pair of rib surfaces of the drive rib and the driven rib which are circumferentially spaced and opposed to each other" (emphasis added) as required by claim 1. Rather, Strachovsky discloses a body of rubber (8) having circular plates (9) bonded to the ends of the body of rubber (8). See col. 2, lines 12-15. At the center of the circular plates (9), bolts (11) are received. See col. 2, lines 15-19. A bolt (11) on one end of the body of rubber (8) is secured to the face plate of a first shaft (1) and a second bolt (11) on the other end of the body of rubber (8) is secured to the face plate of a second shaft (2). See Fig. 2. Indeed, Strachovsky is silent on a drive rib and a driven rib on a drive flange and a driven flange, respectively, let alone a drive rib and a driven rib which are circumferentially spaced and opposed to each other.

Furthermore, the overhanging lips or flanges (10a) of Strachovsky bearing against the inner faces of the circular plates (9) protrude in a direction parallel to the axis of the shafts (1, 2). See Fig. 2; col. 2, lines 15-19. Because claim 1 requires "a pair of mounting plates attached respectively to a pair of rib surfaces of the drive rib and the driven rib which are circumferentially spaced and opposed to each other" (emphasis added) and "the pair of mounting plates are respectively provided with protrusions protruding toward each other," the protrusions of the mounting plates protrude circumferentially.

Thus, Strachovsky does not anticipate claim 1. Claims 4-10, 13 and 15-17 variously depend from, or at least require all the elements of, claim 1 and, thus, also are not anticipated for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

VII. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Strachovsky. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As discussed above, Strachovsky at least fails to teach, and likewise fails to suggest, "a pair of mounting plates attached respectively to a pair of rib surfaces of the drive rib and the driven rib which are circumferentially spaced and opposed to each other" (emphasis added) as required by claim 1. Claim 14 indirectly depends from claim 1 and, therefore, contains all of the features of claim 1.

Thus, Strachovsky would not have rendered obvious claim 14. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

VIII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Replacement Drawing Sheets

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